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5 NOVEMBER 1982U.S. Indicts Castro Officials On Drug Counts
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MIAMI

Four Cuban government officials _ two diplomats, a navy vice admiral and the man who helped organize the 1980 Cuban boatlift _ were charged by the U.S. government in drug conspiracy indictments released Friday.

They were among 14 people accused of using the island "as a loading station and source of supplies" for drug smugglers operating between Colombia and the United States between October 1979 and January 1981.

The eight-count, 19-page indictment was sparse on details but mentioned an alleged plan to smuggle 5 million methaqualone tablets into the United States. The counts charged conspiracies to import marijuana and methaqualone from Colombia, by way of Cuba.

The Cuban officials indicted were identified as:

Rene Rodriguez Cruz, reportedly an official of Cuban intelligence, a member of the Cuban Communist Party Central Committee and president of the Cuban Institute of Friendship With The Peoples. It was in the latter capacity in 1980 that Rodriguez helped organize the boatlift that sent nearly 125,000 Cuban refugees to the United States _ including thousands of criminals sent directly from Cuban prisons.

Fernando Rovelo Renedo, Cuban ambassador to Colombia until the embassy in Bogota was closed in 1981. Rovelo was identified as the godfather of a 2-year-old daughter of Colombian drug trafficker Juan "Johnny" Crump.

Aldo Santamaria Cuadrado, also known as Rene Baeza Rodriguez. He was identified in the indictment as a vice admiral in the Cuban navy and a member of the the Cuban Communist Party who "would supervise in Cuba the protection and resupply of ships transporting marijuana from Colombia to the United States by way of Cuba."

Gonzalo Bassols Suarez, identified as a former minister-counsel of the Cuban embassy in Bogota.

Also named was Jaime Guillot Lara, a reputed Colombian drug trafficker. U.S. officials were outraged when Mexico released Lara from prison last month. He reportedly is in Spain and also is wanted by Colombia for allegedly helping smuggle arms to leftist guerrillas.

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